

HARBOR WARNINGS

An AD&D 2nd Edition Encounter for the Amedio Sandbox Campaign by Falln

Location: Docks of Shadowshore

Time: Early morning, mist still hanging over the water

SETUP

As the PCs pass through the foggy docks just after dawn, a sharp whistle cuts the air. A dockhand sprints toward them, shouting for help

"Something's wrong with the net crew! They went under and didn't come back up!"

A tangled fishing net, half-dragged onto the stone pier, lies abandoned. The boat still rocks gently at its moorings. One crewman is visible — pale, dripping, and muttering incoherently. Something wet and unnatural stirs just below the surface.

WHAT'S HAPPENING

- ◆ A small school of **sea spawn** (humanoid fish-thralls) has taken over the crew, pulled from the

deep by cursed bait accidentally dragged up in the nets.

- ◆ The dockworker asking for help is unaware of the true threat.
- ◆ The muttering survivor is **partially transformed** and will lash out in madness if approached.
- ◆ The cursed bait (a barnacle-crusted idol fragment) lies hidden in the net. Removing it weakens the sea spawn's grip.
- ◆ If the PCs delay or flee, another dock crew will be attacked next.

STATISTICS

Transformed Dockhand (Partially Corrupted Human, Fighter L1)

AC 8 (torn leather); MV 6 (limping); HD 1; hp 5; #AT 1; Dmg 1d4+1 (fishing gaff); SA: Rage (−1 AC, +1 dmg); AL CE; XP 15; THAC0 20

Stats: Str 12, Dex 9, Con 13, Int 6, Wis 6, Cha 3

Notes: Unstable and muttering. Attacks anyone who



touches the net or gets too close. Slime around eyes and gills is a clue to his condition.

Sea Spawn (3–4, Brine Thralls)

AC 6 (scaled skin); MV 9, Swim 12; HD 2; hp 10 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (barnacle-sheathed claws); SA: Aquatic Grapple (save vs. paralyzation or held underwater 1 round); AL CE; XP 65 each; THAC0 19
Stats: Str 14, Dex 11, Con 15, Int 5, Wis 6, Cha 4
Notes: Emerged from below. Protect the cursed idol subconsciously. Flee if it is destroyed or thrown into the harbor.

Cursed Idol Fragment (in net)

No stats; detects as faintly magical (Necromancy + Enchantment).

Notes: Removing it causes Sea Spawn to suffer –2 to attacks for 3 rounds, after which they flee into the water unless pursued.

Frightened Dockhand (Witness, Commoner L0)

AC 10; MV 12; HD 0; hp 3; #AT 0; Dmg: none; AL NG; XP 7; THAC0 20

Notes: Will beg PCs for help but has no useful combat ability. May flee or freeze up during combat.

Shadowshore Watch Patrol Guards (1d4+1)

AC 7 (studded leather or scavenged gear); MV 12; HD 1–1; hp 4 each; #AT 1; Dmg 1d6 (short sword) or 1d4 (sap); AL LE; XP 7 each; THAC0 20

Stats: Str 11, Dex 10, Con 10, Int 9, Wis 8, Cha 8
Notes: Lazy and often late. Will harass survivors and demand bribes. Flee from supernatural threats unless outnumbering them 3:1.

Shadowshore Watch Sergeant (optional, 1 in 3 chance)

AC 6 (chain shirt + Dex); MV 12; HD 2; hp 10; #AT 1; Dmg 1d8 (scimitar); AL LE; XP 65; THAC0 19
Stats: Str 14, Dex 12, Con 11, Int 10, Wis 10, Cha 9

Notes: Cunning and self-serving. Will feign leadership and demand explanations or “confiscate” magical items for safety. Avoids direct combat with the sea spawn unless sure of victory.



ITEM: Barnacle-Crusted Idol Fragment

Minor Cursed Item, Necromantic Resonance

Description:

A jagged piece of stone about the size of a clenched fist, half-covered in blackened barnacles and trailing cold seawater even when dry. Carved into its face is a worn, spiral sigil — its design faintly wrong, as though it were meant to be understood by something not entirely human. The stone hums faintly at night and gives off a briny, rotting scent.

Any creature touching the idol directly feels a strange vertigo, like standing too close to deep water in a storm.

STATISTICS

- **School:** Necromancy (mixed with trace Enchantment)
- **Detection:** Detects faintly under *Detect Magic* and radiates unease to clerics of sea gods or nature domains.
- **Cursed Effect:**
 - Creatures within 30 feet must save vs. Spells once per hour or suffer –1 to Wisdom (cumulative, max –3) while near the idol. Wisdom returns 1 point per hour away from it.
 - Aquatic or corrupted creatures (like sea spawn) are **drawn** to it and will attempt to defend or recover it instinctively.
 - If kept on one’s person overnight, roll 1d6:
 - **1–3:** Nightmares of drowning or chanting in Deep Speech
 - **4–5:** Wake up soaked, take 1 hp of cold damage
 - **6:** No effect, but a nearby creature begins humming a strange sea tune
- **Removal:** Casting *Remove Curse* on the idol renders it inert, but doing so may cause it to **crack and release a salt mist** (10' radius, save vs. Breath Weapon or blinded for 1 round).
- **Value:** None — though a black-market sea cultist or necromancer might offer 100–300 gp for it, depending on campaign flavor.

CHECKS

- **Wisdom check:** Notice the dockhand's eyes are clouded and his gills are not natural — he's not just in shock.
- **Intelligence check:** Recognize that the net's damage came from below, not from mishandling. Suggests an unnatural attack.
- **Detect Magic (spell or item):** Reveal the cursed idol fragment tangled in the net. Faint necromantic aura.
- **Tracking (ranger or proficiency):** Identify multiple sets of wet, scaled footprints leading from the waterline to the boat.
- **Charisma (reaction roll):** Calm the frightened witness before he flees. A successful check may reveal what he saw pull the crew under.
- **Strength check:** Pull the net fully onto the pier without damage — risk exposing or breaking the idol.
- **Move Silently (thief skill):** Approach the boat or transformed dockhand without alerting the submerged sea spawn.
- **Wisdom (Healing proficiency):** Diagnose the transformed dockhand's state as magical corruption, not injury or disease.

REWARDS AND OUTCOMES

- If the cursed idol is removed, examined, or destroyed, the sea spawn lose their connection and flee. The item may be traced to deeper coastal ruins or cult activity, offering a hook for future sessions.
- If the dockhand is subdued but spared, he may recover partially with magical aid — offering a firsthand account of the transformation and naming the ship that hauled up the idol.
- PCs who resolve the situation with minimal civilian harm may receive a quiet reward from the Dockworkers' Guild: 2d10 gp, a potion of water breathing (single dose), or early access to sealed-off harbor areas.
- If the Shadowshore Watch is bribed (2–5 gp), they avoid arresting the PCs or reporting the event. Otherwise, they may attempt to confiscate any treasure or accuse the party of “harbor disturbance.”
- Searching the sea spawn's trail or the boat's hold uncovers 45 gp in damp coin, a salt-crusted chart showing old coastal ruins, and a sealed letter in coded script referring to “the tide's calling.”
- If the cursed idol is kept, it may begin to influence dreams or attract further sea spawn attention in later sessions.